



The Pause

A Guide for Responding Instead of Reacting

SELF-CONTROL • CLARITY • COMMUNICATION • EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Strong emotions are real, but they do not have to make our decisions for us.

Use this page to slow the moment down, separate facts from assumptions, and choose your response.

The goal is not to feel less. It is to respond with greater wisdom.

01 What happened?

Separate what actually happened from what I am assuming it means.

02 What am I feeling?

Name the emotion before deciding what to do with it.

03 What story am I telling myself?

What meaning, motive, or conclusion have I added to the facts?

04 What do I actually know?

What is certain - and what am I guessing, fearing, or interpreting?

05 What outcome do I want?

Think beyond winning the moment. What do I want this conversation or relationship to look like afterward?

06 What response would I be proud of tomorrow?

Choose the response that reflects the person I want to be, not simply the emotion I feel right now.



FROM REACTION TO RESPONSE

Before You Respond

A pause is not avoidance. It is the space where wisdom gets a vote.

THE 60-SECOND PAUSE

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| 1. Breathe. | Give your body a moment to come down before your words go out. |
| 2. Check the facts. | What do I know? What am I assuming? |
| 3. Name the goal. | What outcome do I actually want here? |
| 4. Choose tomorrow. | Respond in a way your calmer self will respect. |

THE RESPONSE I WANT TO CHOOSE:

A few questions to carry with you:

- Am I trying to understand - or trying to win?
- Will saying this move us toward the outcome I actually want?
- Does this need a response right now, or would a little time help me respond better?

You can feel it without obeying it.

You don't have to act on every emotion simply because it is real.

A feeling can be honored without being handed control.



Pause long enough to choose the response that reflects your character, not merely the intensity of the moment.